

**§ 90-171.21. Board of Nursing; composition; selection; vacancies; qualifications; term of office; compensation.**

(a) The Board shall consist of 14 members. Eight members shall be registered nurses. Three members shall be licensed practical nurses. Three members shall be representatives of the public.

(b) Selection. – The North Carolina Board of Nursing shall conduct an election each year to fill vacancies of nurse members of the Board scheduled to occur during the next year. Nominations of candidates for election of registered nurse members shall be made by written petition signed by not less than 10 registered nurses eligible to vote in the election. Nominations of candidates for election of licensed practical nurse members shall be made by written petition signed by not less than 10 licensed practical nurses eligible to vote in the election. Every licensed registered nurse holding an active license shall be eligible to vote in the election of registered nurse board members. Every licensed practical nurse holding an active license shall be eligible to vote in the election of licensed practical nurse board members. The list of nominations shall be filed with the Board after January 1 of the year in which the election is to be held and no later than midnight of the first day of April of such year. Before preparing ballots, the Board shall notify each person who has been duly nominated of the person's nomination and request permission to enter the person's name on the ballot. A member of the Board who is nominated for reelection and who does not withdraw the member's name from the ballot is disqualified to participate in conducting the election. Elected members shall begin their term of office on January 1 of the year following their election.

Nominations of persons to serve as public members of the Board may be made to the Governor or the General Assembly by any citizen or group within the State. The Governor shall appoint one public member to the Board, and the General Assembly shall appoint two public members to the Board. Of the public members appointed by the General Assembly, one shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and one shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Board members shall be commissioned by the Governor upon their election or appointment.

(c) Vacancies. – All unexpired terms of Board members appointed by the General Assembly shall be filled within 45 days after the term is vacated. The Governor shall fill all other unexpired terms on the Board within 30 days after the term is vacated. For vacancies of registered nurse or licensed practical nurse members, the Governor shall appoint the person who received the next highest number of votes to those elected members at the most recent election for board members. Appointees shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term and until their successors have been duly elected or appointed and qualified.

(d) Qualifications. – Of the eight registered nurse members on the Board, one shall be a nurse administrator employed by a hospital or a hospital system, who shall be accountable for the administration of nursing services and not directly involved in patient care; one shall be an individual who meets the requirements to practice as a certified registered nurse anesthetist, a certified nurse midwife, a clinical nurse specialist, or a nurse practitioner; two shall be staff nurses, defined as individuals who are primarily involved in direct patient care regardless of practice setting; one shall be an at-large registered nurse who meets the requirements of sub-subdivisions (1) a., a1., and b. of this subsection, but is not currently an educator in a program leading to licensure or any other degree-granting program; and three shall be nurse educators. Minimum ongoing employment requirements for every registered nurse and licensed practical nurse shall include continuous employment equal to or greater than fifty percent (50%) of a full-time position that meets the criteria for the specified Board member position. Of the three nurse educators, one shall be a practical nurse educator, one shall be an associate

degree or diploma nurse educator, and one shall be a baccalaureate or higher degree nurse educator. All nurse educators shall meet the minimum education requirement as established by the Board's education program standards for nurse faculty. Candidates eligible for election to the Board as nurse educators are not eligible for election as the at-large member.

- (1) Except for the at-large member, every registered nurse member shall meet the following criteria:
  - a. Hold a current, unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse in North Carolina.
  - a1. Be a resident of North Carolina.
  - b. Have a minimum of five years of experience as a registered nurse.
  - c. Have been engaged continuously in a position that meets the criteria for the specified Board position for at least three years immediately preceding election.
  - d. Show evidence that the employer of the registered nurse is aware that the nurse intends to serve on the Board.
- (2) Every licensed practical nurse member shall meet the following criteria:
  - a. Hold a current, unencumbered license to practice as a licensed practical nurse in North Carolina.
  - a1. Be a resident of North Carolina.
  - c. Have a minimum of five years of experience as a licensed practical nurse.
  - d. Have been engaged continuously in the position of a licensed practical nurse for at least three years immediately preceding election.
  - e. Show evidence that the employer of the licensed practical nurse is aware that the nurse intends to serve on the Board.
- (3) A public member appointed by the Governor shall not be a provider of health services or employed in the health services field. No public member appointed by the Governor or person in the public member's immediate family as defined by G.S. 90-405(8) shall be currently employed as a licensed nurse or been previously employed as a licensed nurse.
- (4) The nurse practitioner, nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, or clinical nurse specialist member shall be recognized by the Board as a registered nurse who meets the following criteria:
  - a. Has graduated from or completed a graduate level advanced practice nursing education program accredited by a national accrediting body.
  - b. Maintains current certification or recertification from a national credentialing body approved by the Board or meets other requirements established by rules adopted by the Board.
  - c. Practices in a manner consistent with rules adopted by the Board and other applicable law.

(e) Term. – Members of the Board shall serve four-year staggered terms. No member shall serve more than two consecutive four-year terms or eight consecutive years after January 1, 2005.

(f) Removal. – The Board may remove any of its members for neglect of duty, incompetence, or unprofessional conduct. A member subject to disciplinary proceedings shall be disqualified from Board business until the charges are resolved.

(g) Reimbursement. – Board members are entitled to receive compensation and reimbursement as authorized by G.S. 93B-5. (1981, c. 360, s. 1; c. 852, s. 1; 1987, c. 651, s. 2;

1991, c. 643, s. 1; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 1011, s. 3; 1997-456, s. 27; 2001-98, s. 2; 2003-146, s. 1; 2004-199, s. 26(a); 2006-264, s. 47.)